6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

and other female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the boy, and after taking their meals together from the same leaf, they proceed to the pandal, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavâlan and girl separately in the presence of Enangans and other friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to constitute a divorce."

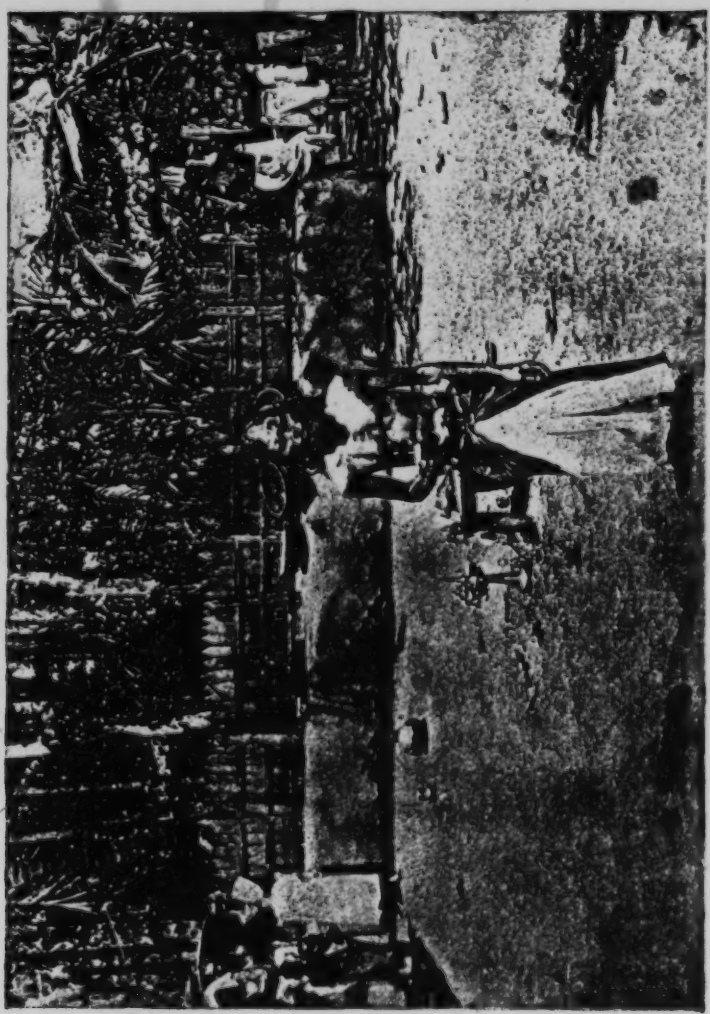
If, as has been said, the "pâttu" sung by the Brâhmani, in "*Rig Vêdaswaram*" is in substitution for the Vêdas sung at the Nambûtiri's wedding—because the Vêdas cannot be used by any but Brâhmans—this part of the ceremonial seems to indicate imitation of the Nambûtiris. The Brâhmani is not however a "Brâhman lady" but merely represents one. In North Malabar she is of the Nambisan caste.

The ceremony is much more analogous to that obtaining in the Bellary district and round about it, through which women, called Basivis, are, after an initiatory ceremony of devotion to a deity, compelled (under certain conditions) to follow no rule of chastity, but whose children are under no degradation, than to the initiation of the Dêvadâsi in her career of harlotry.* It must be said, however, that the ceremony, more especially as modified by poor people, when the Manavâlan is represented by a clay figure adorned with flowers, the handiwork of the girl's mother, looks very like it. But what demands consideration now is the position of Manavâlan to the bride. Does the ceremony confer on him any of the rights of a husband? There is much diversity of opinion on the point. Some say it does, while some say it does not. It seems certain that, as a rule, there can be no cohabitation between the two as a mere corollary of the tâli-tying ceremony. Should there be three girls in a family, *i.e.*, in the same taravâd house, aged, say, 9, 5 and 3, the ceremony is always done for all three at the same time. The only condition as to age of the girl is that the ceremony must be done before she reaches puberty. The bridegroom (to call him so) is selected after consulting agreement between his horoscope and the girl's. He is seated beside her in the marriage pandal, and he invests her with the tâli. They eat of the same plantain leaf (used as a plate throughout Malabar). They are placed in the same chamber, to go through the fiction

* An account of the Basivis, their devotion to deities, etc., by the writer will be found in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. II., 6 (1891).

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

791
142
292
415
302
417



A VELICHCHAPPAD.

[Facing P. 242]

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

291 184 richer classes go in for Benares silk. This is wound round the loins and extends to the feet. The upper part of the body is seldom covered by the commoner folk, though most of them carry a second piece of cloth with them. Among the titled classes of the Nāyars it is customary to put on a long piece of laced muslin on the upper part of their body.

Mostly the Nāyars go barefoot, though expensive and elaborately-made sandals are used by the richer classes.

824 302 *Scents, Flowers, etc.*—The Nāyars use a lot of scented things. Sandal-wood paste, which has a beautiful aroma, is generally used on various parts of the body. Musk is also used, generally by ladies. Jasmine is the favourite flower. It is worn in clusters by women in their hair. It is very difficult to find an old Nāyar house which has not got a jasmine plant in its garden. Its scent is delightful, and when strung together as a garland it makes the most delightful, as well as the most welcome, present to a lady. Jasmine is also strewn in the bridal bed.

415 412 326 *Household Utensils.*—Household utensils, plates, pots, etc., are mostly made of bronze. Very few Nāyar families have got what is spoken of as household silver. The material they use is generally made with great taste, but the praise for this does not belong to them. The workers in bronze are hereditary craftsmen. Their life is devoted to designing and making these things, and naturally they have acquired great efficiency in it. The only praise that the Nāyars deserve for using them lies in the fact that, in spite of a strong temptation to go in for aluminium ware, which is much cheaper, they persist in using the costly, but better made and more artistic bronze things.

121 198 What is the future of this people? Will they become patrilineal and merge into the vast ocean of Hindu population, or will they remain matrilineal, while adjusting their social relationships and economic organisations to suit the changing conditions of life in India? Will they break up their *Tharawad* (the joint family) and abandon the primitive system of classificatory relationship? These are questions difficult to answer, but some new tendencies may here be noticed.

178 611 One thing I must say to start with. There is no chance of the system of matriliny undergoing any fundamental change in Malabar. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, the economic interest is too large to submit to any change in the order of things dictated by purely theoretical reasons. Even if we could establish that the patrilineal system of life is superior to the matrilineal, the change from the latter to the former would not take place in Malabar, because it would mean a social revolution of some magnitude. Secondly, as long as there is the Brahmin marriage system it is not only the Nāyars that are interested in its upkeep, but also the Nampudiris.

178 564 Another reason is this. There is in Malabar what may be called a strong caste war. There is first of all the Nampudiri class, mostly landlords with great social and religious influence. Their rivalry is not of great importance. There are, then, the Nāyars. Thirdly, we have the Syrian Christians, who are an extremely intelli-

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

177
342 recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore.
342 In these days of comparative peace and security of life and
178 property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

351 As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same
[343] compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated
[312] tank for bathing purposes, often full of fish and water lilies, a
[515] well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from it to the kitchen, an out-house *(matam)* for the Brahman
[574] travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family
[343] deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with
[245] mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

356 Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing
[175] on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early child-
352 hood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean.
[556] Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days fur-
[177] nished with articles of European manufacture, and all their domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

415 The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal
352 pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal
412 pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife,
184 a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

342 The house itself is called by several names according to
564 the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 8 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

Malabar. "The first regular ceremony performed during pregnancy is known as pulikudi or drinking tamarind, which corresponds to the Pumsavanam of the Brāhmans. But there are other observances of less importance, which commonly, if not invariably, precede this, and may be considered as corresponding to the Garbharakshana (embryo or womb protection) ceremony sometimes performed by Brāhmans, though not one of the obligatory sacraments. Sometimes the pregnant woman is made to consume daily a little ghee (clarified butter), which has been consecrated by a Nambūdiri with appropriate mantrams. Sometimes exorcists of the lower castes, such as Pānans, are called in, and perform a ceremony called Balikkala, in which they draw magic patterns on the ground, into which the girl throws lighted wicks, and sing rude songs to avert from the unborn babe the unwelcome attentions of evil spirits, accompanying them on a small drum called tudi, or with bell-metal cymbals. The ceremony concludes with the sacrifice of a cock, if the woman is badly affected by the singing. The pulikudi is variously performed in the fifth, seventh, or ninth month. An auspicious hour has to be selected by the village astrologer for this as for most ceremonies. A branch of a tamarind tree should be plucked by the pregnant woman's brother, who should go to the tree with a kindi (bell-metal vessel) of water, followed by an Enangatti* carrying a hanging lamp with five wicks (tukkuvilakku), and, before plucking it, perform three pradakshinams round it. In the room in which the ceremony is to be

* An Enangan or Inangan is a man of the same caste and sub-division or marriage group. It is usually translated "kinsman," but is at once wider and narrower in its connotation. My Enangans are all who can marry the same people that I can. An Enangatti is a female member of an Enangan's family.

765 613 574 [783] that, in some parts of Malabar, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Karanavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him. To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that, on the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the taravād of the deceased combine, and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours who are invited, one man or woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called patni karigi. On the seventh day, a return feast will be given by the taravād of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours. Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed, but the members of the taravād remain under death pollution. On the fourteenth day 764 comes the sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the cal- 613 cined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male [415] members of the taravād go to the place of cremation, and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried (not burnt by fire in the usual way), cover up the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe, and return [184] home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected [778] on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gaya, Rameswaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynaad, and there 764 dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or 769 ashes of any one having been taken to Gaya and there 613 deposited in the river, the survivors of the taravād have